

WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

101 S. Webster Street
GEF 2, Room 27
Madison, WI 53707
Friday, March 19, 1999
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

AMENDED MINUTES

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

Committee

Attendees: Jude Morse, Chair (substitute); Phyllis Bermingham, Marathon Co. Employment and Training; Mary Ann Cook, Dane Co. Dept. of Human Services; John Schear (alternate), Opportunities Industrialization Center of Greater Milwaukee (OIC-GM); Mona Garland, MAXIMUS; Deb Hughes (alternate), Southwest Consortium; Clarence Johnson (alternate), YW-Works; Tina Koehn, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS); Jim Krivsky (alternate), Racine Co. Human Services Dept.; Barbara Metoxen, Oneida Tribe; Jeff McCabe (alternate), Employment Solutions; Jim Nitz (alternate), Kaiser Group; Shirley Ross, La Crosse Dept. of Human Services; Michael Van Dyke, Door Co. Dept. of Social Services; Judy Weseman, Kenosha Co. Division of Workforce Development

State Staff

Attendees: Ginevra Ewers, BMO; Randy Hayward, BEPO; Tim Hineline, BWI; Sue Larsen, BWI; Christina Martin, BEPO; Germaine Mayhew, DES Training Section; Jude Morse, BMO; Leonor Rosas DeLeon, BWI; Shawn Smith, BWI; Joe Stafford, BEPO; Jan Van Vleck, Special Assistant, Alice Wilkins, BWI; Rick Zynda, BWI

Absent: Diane Hausinger, Fond du Lac Co. Dept. of Social Services

Guests: Marcia Christianson, Forward Service Corporation; Kelly Grant, Central Wisconsin Community Action Council; Sharon McCormick, Sheboygan Co. Dept. of Health and Human Services; David Pagel, Portage Co. Health and Human Services Dept.; Teresa Pierce, Western Wisconsin Private Industry Council (PIC); Marilyn Putz, Walworth County, Kaiser Group; Rita Renner, YW Works; Kim Walia, Clark Co. Dept. of Social Services; Roger Williams, OIC-GM;

Recorder: Sue Larsen, W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee Coordinator

(NOTE: Shirley Ross, Michael Van Dyke and Deb Hughes requested edits of the March 1999 minutes regarding the inclusion of the definition of a W-2 case, the Minimum Performance Standards and the Community Steering Committee sections. These edits are indicated by strike through on the incorrect language and underlining of the new language.

Jude Morse chaired the March 19, 1999 meeting in Jean Rogers' absence. Governor Thompson, Secretary Stewart and Jean Rogers have been visiting Job Centers as a part of the Government on the Road tour.

February 1999 Minute Approval

A motion to approve the February 1999 minutes was made by Clarence Johnson, seconded by Jim Nitz, and motion carried.

Issue/Discussion: Minimum Performance Standards, Joe Stafford, DES/BEPO

Joe Stafford shared a draft Administrator's Memo regarding agency minimum performance standards, for the committee's input as the Department's official point of contact for w-2 agencies. The same draft memo was also shared with the Income Maintenance Advisory Committee (IMAC). This memo describes what the Division feels are minimum performance standards for agencies. Many agencies will have developed their own requirements, which may be much stricter. These minimum standards were negotiated between Milwaukee County Department of Human Services and the Milwaukee W-2 agencies. The overall response from the committee was negative. It was felt that many of these issues only applied to Milwaukee County and that instead of performance standards, the memo outlined a corrective action plan, which should be monitored by the DES Contract Manager. It was also felt that enforcing such items as dress codes and prohibiting televisions or radios provided an unnecessary level of detail.

Jude Morse indicated that the history behind this memo was the result of issues that arose in Milwaukee County and the Department wanted to provide a consistent policy on a statewide basis. Also, by describing minimum performance standards, it provided a framework for describing failure to serve penalties.

Milwaukee W-2 agency committee members described some of the problems that had been occurring with Milwaukee County staff.

Michael Van Dyke made a motion for the Department to retrieve the document and not to discuss it again. He expressed concern that the document was presented as a draft Administrator's Memo rather than the usual back ground papers that are presented to the committee. Phyllis Bermingham seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jude Morse stated that although this document was issued as a draft Administrator's Memo it was intended as a discussion paper. The Department would like to work with the agencies in a positive manner to resolve issues and thanked the committee for helping to provide guidance on this issue.

Issue/Discussion: Community Steering Committee - Resource for W-2 Time Limits, Susan E. Gadacz, DES/BWI

Sue Gadacz provided information to the committee regarding community responses to welfare reform. The Institute for Policy Research from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois issued a publication called ***Building the Bridge from Client to Citizen: A Community Toolbox for Welfare Reform***. This publication discusses the need for Community Steering Committees for effective neighborhood outreach, improving communication on welfare reform and increasing participation in structured life skill activities. This approach uses neighborhood centers to educate the neighborhood residents and coordinating agencies on the time limit requirements for participation in welfare reform activities. Another goal of this approach is to empower participants by providing them a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment to participate in certain life skill activities and share their strengths and frustrations on their journey to self-sufficiency. There are five components to Community-Building Tools. They are:

- **A Capacity Inventory**
An overall assessment of the participant's capacities, skills, talents, gifts, and limitations.
- **A Self-Help Peer Group**
Based on the 12-step principles where support is gained from one another.
- **A Circle of Support**
Completed by participant to identify a group of friends, not peers, not professional helpers, to support their short- and long-term goals.
- **An Association Inventory**
A listing of volunteer groups that already exist within the community to coordinate efforts to maximize resources.
- **A Business Inventory**
Involvement of community employers to reveal present and future employment opportunities, and ensure job-training programs are designed with real employment opportunities in mind.

The major focus of this philosophy is to move ideas from the "board room" to the neighborhoods by using community members on the committee who have a vested interest in promoting education and awareness. As a means of sharing successful outreach efforts on a statewide basis, committee members were asked to come to the meeting and discuss their agency's activities with the Community Steering Committee (CSC) and other community agencies to enhance and support W-2 activities. Community Steering Committees can be instrumental coordinating efforts to provide outreach and training for a community.

Phyllis Bermingham provided information and handouts regarding activities that are occurring in Marathon County. Marathon County is concerned regarding the W-2 time limit issue for hard-to serve participants. Their agency has just finished reviewing each W-2 case in regard to their time limit status to try and address barriers for these families. Tina Koehn indicated that their Children Services Network has provided a great deal of support in this area. Deb Hughes stated that the ~~W-2 Southwest Consortium~~ Grant County CSC is being involved in participants who are seeking Supplemental Security Income (SSI) approval. Mary Ann Cook shared Dane County's experience in assigning a special case manager for SSI applicants who works with Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW) attorneys to help facilitate the SSI application process. DES provides a monthly "Best Practice" INFOWORKS article on successful ways that W-2 agencies have involved their community. Sue Gadacz reminded members that best practices can be shared with Cori McFarlane, Green Bay Regional Office, who coordinates the articles for INFOWORKS.

Concerns were raised again regarding the federal regulation that allows no more than 20 percent of the caseload to be exempt from the 60-month lifetime time limit. Committee members would like to have a better understanding of this policy and how the reporting will occur.

Issue/Discussion: MEDICAID FORWARD CARD IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE, Jennie Carthew, DHFS/DOH

Forward Card Implementation Plan

- Implementation for the new Forward card is being delayed. The original pilot date was late March 1999.
- Forward cards will now be piloted in ten counties in late June or July 1999. Pilot counties include Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, LaFayette, Rock, Sauk and Walworth.
- Statewide implementation as early as two months after the pilot.

Information/Training Campaign

General Public

- Sept. 1998: Project plan mailed to general interested party's list. The list includes: Recipient advocates, provider associations, public health agencies, WIC program, county and W2 agency directors, state agencies, legislators, special interest and statewide advisory groups.

County/W2/State Agencies

- Aug. 1998 – ongoing: Presentation of project plan in statewide meetings and trainings held by county, state and public agencies.
- Feb./Mar. 1999: County agencies notified of project status via CARES' broadcast message system (DXBM).

Recipients

- Feb. 23, 1999: Recipients in pilot counties received an initial notification of the coming changes.
- When implemented, plastic cards will be sent to pilot county recipients along with a recipient guide with instructions on how to use and care for their new card.
- Statewide recipient hotline has been expanded to manage higher volume of calls.

Medicaid Providers

- Booklet was mailed to providers announcing the new card, including an invitation to statewide regional training sessions with an opportunity to meet with eligibility verification vendors.
- Ongoing provider Medicaid updates communicate progress of the project.
- Provider correspondence lines are expanded and Automatic Voice Response (AVR) features are enhanced to manage increase in provider calls.

Other changes include EDS Federal adding 48 hotlines for voice response to answer customer questions. In addition CARES client notices are being redesigned to include information regarding the Forward card. In addition, due to the expanded population, the notices continue to be redesigned for easier reading.

Issue/Discussion: EBT Time Line, Judy Woelfel, DES/EBT Project

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) public hearings have been held which provided valuable input from grocery associations, the Milwaukee Hunger Task Force, Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW), Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities (WCDD) and other client advocate groups. . Now it is in the process of being reviewed by the Legislative committees. The rule is anticipated to be ready by July 1999.

EBT is developing a training plan at this time. Joint state and county planning is scheduled for April. Preliminary system testing is scheduled for June, and the EBT implementation kickoff is scheduled for July 1999. Rock County is the pilot county, which is a border state county. November 1999 is schedule as the first month of EBT, with no food stamp coupons issued by mail.

Committee members expressed concern regarding training that would occur for the use of the Forward card for EBT that was not planned for the Medicaid use. It was felt that this would create confusion for clients who already held the Forward cards. Joint training for the use of the card for both Medicaid and EBT was suggested. Geri Mayhew stated that the training section is strategizing with providing training in different areas, such as providing videos that can be viewed in malls and other areas in the community. With the EBT project we can look to other states on the successes and failures that occurred. The other states dealt with these same issues.

Issue/Discussion: Training Section Update, Germaine Mayhew, DES Training Section

The first round of training on Food Stamp Special Topic areas has been provided.

BadgerCare training is scheduled to begin effective June 7, 1999, a two-day course for eligibility workers and a 1-day session for Financial and Employment Planners (FEPs). A BadgerCare overview will be provided to individuals who need more than a basic understanding of the program. Division of Health will provide training for community groups and other interested parties.

Issue/Discussion: Community Reinvestment Manual Tracking Update Shawn Smith, DES/BWI

The development of the Community Reinvestment application and Manual Data Reporting form resulted from concern expressed at the January 22, 1999 committee meeting. The proposed application and reporting procedures would:

- reduce the risk to the Department by agencies failing to collect sufficient data for federal reporting purposes,
- respond to W-2 agencies regarding the level of detail in data collection,
- establish a precedent for TANF reporting procedures for programs administered by other agencies.

This proposal would be the foundation for initiating an departmental work group to research and review steps taken by other states to implement programs funded by TANF that are subject to intensive federal reporting requirements. W-2 agencies have submitted Community Reinvestment plans that describe the following three categories of services:

Assistance Services:

Services provided to an **individual** that meets the federal definition of assistance as described in the proposed TANF rule, i.e., services have a direct monetary value and is provided more than once in a 12-month period. These services count toward the federal participation requirements **and** the 60-month time limit. Federal reporting data must be provided at the risk of severe financial penalties. Agencies will submit a manual reporting form until Community Reinvestment data is implemented in CARES. Examples of this category include:

- housing assistance more than once in 12-month period,
- transportation assistance more than once in 12-month period,
- food assistance more than once in 12-month period.

Non-assistance Service:

Services provided to an **individual** that either does not have a direct monetary value or is short-term assistance (issued only once in a 12-month period). These services are **not** counted toward the 60-month lifetime limit and are **not** subject to the individual federal reporting requirements. DES proposes that the agencies' expenditures are tracked via the CARS system, similar to the current procedure for Emergency Assistance. Examples of this category include:

- job-search activities,
- Counseling activities, such as alcohol or drug abuse (AODA) or mental health,
- Housing assistance provide once in a 12-month period.

Group Services:

One-time services provided in a group format, making it difficult to collect individual or family level data. DES is proposing that the W-2 agencies stipulate through assurances that only a certain percentage of the budget for these services is met through the use of Community Reinvestment funding. Furthermore, periodic surveys of types of clients using the services will be required to support the applied percentage of the budget supplied by the Community Reinvestment dollars. No tracking would occur in CARES, nor would TANF eligibility be verified for individuals receiving services. Examples of these services include:

- hotlines,
- funding to food pantries,
- funding to clothing centers.

The committee would like further discussion of this issue at the next meeting.

The committee discussed a variety of topics related to the scope of the W-2 program and the definition of W-2 cases. The committee recommended that the Department include all cases that W-2 agencies are responsible for in the definition of W-2 cases. These cases include W-2 cash benefits payment, W-2 case management (no cash benefits payment), FSET, noncustodial parents, child care and diversion cases.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

**April 16, 1999
1 West Wilson Street
Room B139
Madison, WI 53707**

RECENT AND UPCOMING CARES CHANGES OVERVIEW

Issued March 19,1999

Major Initiatives: Completed or in Progress	DATE	BACKGROUND
Voluntary Quit Policy (VQT)	3/5/99	The logic to sanction, for Food Stamps, individuals who have lost employment without good cause has been implemented. Completion of screen AFLE will allow the sanction to be properly imposed and allow re-application after the sanction has been served.
Clocks	3/5/99	The problem of clocks not ticking properly at all times has been fixed. Two new clocks have been added; one for the parent of a newborn and one for non-marital co-parents and spouses of a W-2 participant were added. Clarifying information about when and how clocks are ticked was included in a DXBM.
Milwaukee County Child Care Conversion	3/5/99	Milwaukee's conversion to the CARES Child Care Payment System was successfully completed on March 5, 1999.
MA Swipe cards	3/99	Clients in the pilot counties will receive their "Forward " cards during the last two weeks of March. Clients in the rest of the state will receive their cards in May. The cards will be valid for use upon receipt. Information packets are presently being mailed to clients in the pilot counties.
Driver Flow Fixes	4/99	The problem of workers getting stuck on screen ABWD, generally when doing a review, will be fixed within the next two weeks. The problem of getting stuck on the clearance screens when doing a W-2 review using ACSO is being researched and should be fixed in April.
BadgerCare	7/1/99	Federal approval for the waivers that were requested to implement BadgerCare has been received. Implementation will begin on 7/1/99.
Food Stamp EBT	10/1/99	Several meetings have been held with the EBT vendor. State staff are in the Joint Application Design process at the present time. A construction and testing plan is being finalized. A pilot county is scheduled to begin operation in 10/99 with full roll out beginning after January 2000.
Major FataIs	ongoing	EDBC fatal having performing paragraph 83200-CRE-VER-CL, which was very prevalent, has been fixed. This fatal has not occurred this week. Numerous other smaller fataIs and abends are scheduled to be fixed on 3/19/99. Research continues on fataIs that occur when there are a large number of unconfirmed rows on AGECE. Also, work is continuing to reduce the overall number of fataIs and abends.
Community Reinvestment	On-Hold	DES is reviewing options. A meeting will be held with R&S to determine federal reporting requirements. Once an option and reporting requirements are determined, Deloitte Consulting will be asked for an estimate to implement in CARES.
Pro-Rated/Wage Paying CSJs	On-Hold	The automation of the pro-rated and wage paying CSJs is postponed until after Badger Care.
Major initiatives: In Planning/Development		
SSA State On-Line Query (SOLQ)	4/99	SSA has expanded the pilot phase of the SOLQ to include Wisconsin. The necessary query screen and audit trail are being programmed in CARES. A couple of volunteer county agencies are needed for the initial pilot.
Simulation for Benefit Recovery		A meeting was held on 3/5/99 of all state staff with an interest in simulation and/or benefit recovery to begin the process of overhauling simulation. A "core" group will be formed to coordinate the overall effort, with smaller groups working on individual aspects of the simulation/benefit recovery process. Agency input will be sought as to the problems they are experiencing, and their suggestion for solutions.